

Nourishing News

IDAHO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS



AUGUST 2008



This publication has been sent to all:

- School Food Services Directors
- School Food Service Kitchen Managers

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UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

PREVIEW THE REVIEW	SMI FOCUS- IS YOUR
August 4 – Nampa	MENU PLANNING SYSTEM
August 7 – Twin Falls	IN COMPLIANCE?
August 12 – Coeur d'Alene	August 8 – Twin Falls
August 15 – Mountain Home	August 13 – Coeur d'Alene
August 19 – Pocatello	August 20 – Pocatello

To sign up for these trainings or more visit our training website
www.databasesdoneright.com/nutrition/

CIRCULATE TO: ☐ Superintendent ☐ Principal
☐ School Nurse ☐ Health Teacher ☐ Kitchen Staff

Important Considerations When Menu Planning:

All Programs

- Use cycle menus
- Standardize all recipes

NSMP

- Have the latest version of your computer software.
- Nutrition facts for all processed products that you are using must be entered.
- Remember if the product has changed since last year, the new product needs to be entered and analyzed.
- When entering ingredients, if there is no value found for a nutrient then *NA* must be entered.
- Actively search for missing nutrient values.
- Follow the correct age/grade grouping.
- When using USDA recipes, follow them exactly or duplicate the recipe and make changes where necessary.
- Include all condiments in the analysis.

Food Based

- Follow the correct grade grouping.
- Include all of the components needed for the day.
- Include all of the components needed for the week.



A Message from the Director

Idaho State Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs welcomes you back to another year of serving fun and nutritious meals to our Idaho's children. Summer's

conclusion does not mean the fun must end. Make the transition from summer to school a little easier for your student customers by planning a cafeteria celebration for the back-to-school season and keep the momentum going all year long. Preparing healthy school meals, role modeling healthy eating habits and offering a friendly greeting are all in a day's work.

Consider using this Idaho State Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs *Nourishing News* Newsletter as a tool for updates and innovative ways to administer your program throughout the year. The Idaho State Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs, is excited about new trainings and projects that will be offered throughout the next several months in supporting

you and your important roles in feeding children.

The importance and nutritional value of school meals are well documented. For many children, school lunch and breakfast are the most important and nutrient-rich meals of their day. Studies have shown that today's healthy school lunches contain more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products than brown bag lunches brought from home. School nutrition professionals are working to ensure nutrition integrity and advocating for policies that set nutrition standards based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. (<http://www.schoolnutrition.org>)

By navigating complex regulations, offering balanced, nutritionally sound meals and meeting financial constraints, school nutrition professionals are operating effective food and nutrition programs that positively impact children's health. Thank you for your hard work.

Sincerely,

Colleen Fillmore, PhD, RD, LD
CNP Idaho State Director

Dietary Guidelines Informational Fact Sheets Available to Schools

Heidi Martin, RD, LD Coordinator

The USDA has developed a set of 10 Fact Sheets for school foodservice professionals. These Fact Sheets offer strategies for purchasing, preparing, and serving meals consistent with the *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Fact sheets are available to print for the following topics:

Use Low-fat Milk, Cheese and Yogurt

Jazz Up Your Menu With Fruits

Serve More Whole Grains

Trim Trans Fat

Meeting the Challenge of Rising Food Costs for Healthier School Meals

Vary Your Vegetables

Be Salt Savvy – Cut Back on Sodium

Include Fiber-Rich Foods

Limit Saturated Fat and Cholesterol

Serve More Dry Beans and Peas

Each fact sheet contains information in the following categories: key issues, recipe for success, USDA commodity facts, messages for students, and did you know.

To read or print these fact sheets visit the Child Nutrition Website at: www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp.

We know that this year many schools will be struggling with increased food costs. Below are some of the suggestions from the *"Meeting the Challenge of Rising Food Costs for Healthier School Meals"* Fact Sheet to help with food costs:

Revamp cycle menus to serve less expensive, popular student choices more often. For example, serve spaghetti instead of lasagna, using whole-grain commodity pasta to reduce food costs.

Serve low-cost beans or other legumes more often as a meat alternate or vegetable choice. For example, serve a bean and cheese burrito, substitute kidney beans for some of the meat in chili, or offer garbanzo beans on a salad bar.

Train staff to follow standardized recipes precisely. Every extra scoop costs money! For example, don't add extra ground beef to the spaghetti sauce recipe.

Serve portion sizes according to the recipe. For example, serve a level ½-cup scoop of mashed potatoes, instead of a heaping scoop.

Plan age-appropriate portion sizes. Serve the food-based optional portion size for grades K-3 to better target their calorie and nutrient needs and reduce waste.

Compare produce prices among various vendors. Contact local farmers about products they can supply at a reasonable price. Buy fresh fruits and vegetables in season to get the best price and peak flavor.

Market your program as a good value to students, teachers, staff, and parents to boost participation. Compare the cost of a typical lunch brought from home to school lunch.

Create new customers through catering! Showcase healthy menus at board meetings and other school events. Cater classroom parties or activities.

For more tips view the full Fact Sheets online.





Do You Need To Change Your Menu Planning System?

Mary Jo Marshall, BS
Coordinator

For the past 12 years, many Idaho school food service directors have been successfully analyzing their menus using nutrient analysis software while others have been struggling to master this task. Some menu planners have a well organized database containing current recipes and accurate, up-to-date nutrition label information while other sponsors have a database packed with information that is incorrect or no longer pertinent.

Finding enough time to complete all of the duties of the director's position can be overwhelming. For many sponsors, labor hours and budgets have been reduced while workloads have increased.

As experienced food service directors retire, sometimes there is minimal training available for the new director. Nutrient standard menu planning is one area where this is most notable. On the other side of the coin, some retiring directors are able to provide great training and technical assistance to the new director before they leave their position.

There are several different menu planning systems approved by USDA for use in the National School Lunch

Programs. Each sponsor is able to choose the system that works best for them.

Computer software and technology can be exciting and challenging to some directors and just plain frustrating to others.

Making a decision on whether to analyze your menus or choose a food based menu planning system often hinges on the comfort level of the menu planner with technology.

Chapters 13-15 of the *Idaho School Food Service Manual* contain information on all of the approved menu planning systems. The menu planner is allowed to change their menu planning system at any time by notifying the State Agency of their decision.

The important thing to keep in mind is that whatever system is chosen, it must be followed. If your district is using the Nutrient Standard Menu Planning (NSMP) system, all menus for all schools and grade levels must be analyzed.

Menu planners who have chosen NSMP but are not currently meeting the NSMP regulations need to be following a food-based menu planning system until they are able to be in compliance with NSMP.

Have you been struggling with time to keep your nutrient analysis data updated?

If you need solutions, please feel free to call the state agency to discuss your options.

The Many Benefits of Cycle Menus

Rachel Johns, RD, LD, Coordinator

Do you spend long hours thinking of what to serve for the upcoming month? If the answer is no, you probably use a cycle menu. Cycle menus are great time-saving tools. Once you have one menu set you can cycle it by repeating the menu. Menus can cycle at different lengths. You can do a short cycle menu that repeats every couple of weeks or you could do a longer cycle menu that repeats every couple of months. Find a length that works best for you and the children you feed.

Cycle menus can help save time and money because you become familiar with your menu. You can spot trends and plan more accurately. This helps reduce waste, predict food costs, and repeat food orders. Longer cycle menus also help vary meals.

Once you have gone through your cycle menu a few times your staff will become more efficient in preparation. They will develop the best strategy for preparation and will be able to plan for the weeks ahead. This can help develop a good routine in the kitchen and promote a more efficient work place.

Cycle menus can be seasonal. We are all aware that it is easier and less expensive to get fresh fruits and vegetables in the warmer months. Cycle menus can be changed during those months to include a larger variety of fresh and local foods.

Starting a cycle menu in your school may take a little extra time and effort in the beginning but once you have taken the time to develop it you will realize it was well worth the advanced planning. The time saving reward will greatly improve your food service operation.

Nutrients Commonly Found Low in Menus

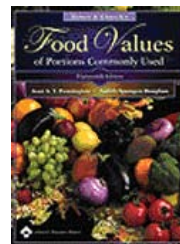
Anna Mae Florence, RD, LD, Coordinator

As SMI reviews are conducted throughout the state, there are districts that have difficulty meeting some of the nutrient standards. Some common nutrients that are found to be low in menus are: Fiber, Vitamin A, and Iron.

To assist districts in finding foods that are high in these and other nutrients, a reference can be found in the Residential Child Care Institutions (RCCI) Manual, under the NSLP tab on CNP website. In the Best Practices chapter (20), pages 20.6-20.9 are handy lists of foods that contain the nutrients that you may have difficulty meeting in your menus. While the list does not cover all foods it may be useful to you.

Another resource that the State Agency sent to all NSLP & RCCI Directors in Sept 07 was Bowes and Church, *Food Values of Portions Commonly Used*. This is quick & easy reference for nutritional values of foods. Every school district and RCCI received one. Please look for this valuable tool, if it is not already in your office.

Remember, menus need to meet the nutrient standards to be in compliance.



Color Up Your Menus

Heidi Martin, RD, LD
Coordinator

It is important to add a variety of colors to school menus. Not only does it make the meal look more attractive, but colorful fruits and vegetables provide the wide range of vitamins, minerals, fiber, and phytochemicals the body uses to maintain good health and energy levels, and reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease.

The Dietary Guidelines state that American diets are frequently low in dark green vegetables, orange vegetables, and beans. Many of these foods are also high in fiber, vitamin A and iron discussed in the "Nutrients Commonly Found Low in Menus" article. Make it a goal this school year to increase these foods in your school's menus.

Focus on serving foods from every color category each week:

BLUE/PURPLE

berries, grapes, plums

GREEN

romaine lettuce, broccoli, kiwi, grapes, spinach, peppers

WHITE

cauliflower, bananas, pears

YELLOW/ORANGE

corn, peaches, oranges, sweet potatoes, carrots, peppers

RED

berries, apples, tomatoes, watermelon, peppers

Remember the 5-A-Day slogan has been changed to "Fruits and Veggies — More Matters" to encourage the consumption of more fruits and vegetables for a healthy life. Fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruits are ALL nutritious and should be included on school menus.

Menu Planning Methods

Anna Mae Florence, RD, LD, Coordinator

For thirteen years, since 1995, the USDA has implemented the SMI, School Meals Initiative review. The purpose of the SMI is to ensure that healthy school meals are being planned/served. A nutrient analysis of the menus for the review week determines if the meals planned/served meet the nutrient standards for the appropriate age/grade level.

So what happens if the menus do not meet the nutrient standards?

In answering this question there are some issues to consider first. A menu planning method needs to be in place. Districts can choose a Food Based menu planning (FBMP) method or a Nutrient Standard menu planning (NSMP) method. This means that the district is following those guidelines.

If a FBMP is chosen then **all** the food components must be planned/served according to the regulations. See pages 15.3-15.7 in the *Idaho School Food Service Manual* for quantities and details. If NSMP is chosen, **all menus need to be entered into the computer program**. Chapter 14 in the *Idaho School Food Service Manual* contains the information on this.

If the menu planning method is not in place, fiscal action could occur. When School Food

Authorities (SFA) fail to act in good faith to promptly bring programs into compliance, State Agencies (SA), at their discretion, may withhold program payments until such time as corrective action is completed. There is no formula but the USDA regional office has advised the State Agency that fiscal action should be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Some guidance has been developed such as: If a month's cycle menus are clearly out of compliance with Nutrient Standards, the SA may want to consider disallowing all meals for that month. If a week's menu were determined deficient, it is reasonable to consider that week for disallowance.

The State Agency is providing a four-hour training on SMI around the state in August and September. Please check the training web site to sign up for the class in your area.

To sign up for these trainings visit our website
<http://www.databasesdoneright.com/nutrition/>



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